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House of Representatives

The Chaplain, Rev. James David FORD, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We begin this day, O gracious God, with thankful hearts for the days that have passed, with anticipation for what tomorrow will bring, and with appreciation for the opportunities of today. With all the pressures of modern life and with all the needs that are yet undone, we know that You grant us the resources for the responsibilities of the day and You free our hearts and souls with grace and peace and love. Grant to us and every person, O God, these gifts and bless us along life's way. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. BALLENGER] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BALLENGER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks announced that the Senate had passed a bill of the following title, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 858. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1998 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain five 1-minutes on each side.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL NEEDS LOTS OF WORK

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the House is expected to vote next week on a Republican tax bill that gives more than half of its benefits to the wealthiest 5 percent of Americans. Because the Republicans do not know how to defend themselves against charges that their bill short-changes working families, Republicans are firing back with the blatantly false charge that tax breaks for millions of working families would be welfare payments.

I would tell my colleagues that the Republican bill denies the \$500 child tax credit to 20 million working families, because it does not let them count the credit against their payroll taxes. This is the Federal taxes that are deducted from the worker's paycheck.

I do not understand why the Republicans are so desperate to keep these working families from getting tax breaks. I suspect it is because they are trying to funnel every dollar they can right back to their wealthy contributors.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, we should welcome ourselves to the Republican Congress where tax breaks for struggling working families are welfare, but massive capital gains and estate tax breaks for the very rich are an important national policy.

NO TAX BREAKS FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT PAY TAXES

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, there are actually some Democrats who are outraged that those who pay no Federal income tax will not benefit from the tax credits that are contained in the Republican tax cut plan.

Let us think about this for a minute. If one pays no Federal income tax, should I be upset because I am not getting a tax cut? This, in my view, is what we call the mother of all entitlement mentalities. It is kind of like complaining about not having a headache because some great new aspirin product is not going to do anything for you. Talk about not fair.

So let us see if I got this straight. It is about 9 o'clock on the night of April 14 and I am filling out my 1040 and I finally get through the form, and at first I am happy as a lottery winner when I find that there is no income tax this year being paid by me. Fat zero. Then I realize hey, wait a minute. This is not fair. If Congress passes a tax cut, I will not get one because I do not pay any taxes. Suddenly now I am sad. I guess I am not as lucky as I thought.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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